12

THE MELANCHOLY of HARUHI SUZUMIYA

ART BY
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STORY BY
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CHARACTERS BY:
NOIZI ITO

GATAN

GATAN

GATAN (KLUNK)

GATAN

IT WAS DURING THE WINTER TRIP THAT I DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION, BUT IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE I COULD ACTU-ALLY DO IT.

SO I'LL BE DISCUSSING THE DETAILS OF WHAT I HAD TO DO... OR RATHER, REALLY WANTED TO DO.

...AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

—TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT REMAINED UNDONE...

THE MELANCHOLY of HARUHI SUZUMIYA

12

ORIGINAL STORY **Nagaru Tanigawa**

MANGA **Gaku Tsugano**

CHARACTER DESIGN:
Noizi Ito

CONTENTS

The Disappearance of Haruhi Suzumiya — Another Day — 001
The Melancholy of Mikuru Asahina I — 043
The Melancholy of Mikuru Asahina II — 077
Editor in Chief ★ Full Speed Ahead! I — 109
Editor in Chief ★ Full Speed Ahead! II — 143

PHEW, WE'RE HOME!

SNOWY MOUNTAINS ARE GREAT AND ALL...

...BUT NOTHING BEATS BREATHING FAMILIAR AIR!

OUR TRIP— WHERE WE'D GOTTEN SNOWED IN AND TRAPPED IN A MYSTERIOUS MANSION— HAD CONCLUDED.

AND THE SOS BRIGADE NOW RETURNED FROM ITS TOUR DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS.

THE CLUB TRIP ISN'T OVER UNTIL YOU MAKE IT HOME!

EVERY-BODY TAKE CARE!

THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY.

WE'RE HITTING THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD SHRINES AND TEMPLES FOR HATSUMOUDE TOMORROW, GOT IT?

BUT SURELY NOTHING WEIRD WOULD HAPPEN IN THE TIME IT WOULD TAKE US TO RETURN TO OUR HOMES FROM THE TRAIN STATION.

IF ANYTHING ELSE HAPPENED, I DOUBTED KOIZUMI OR I WOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT.

THERE WAS SOMETHING I WAS REGRETTING NOT GETTING DONE LAST YEAR, SO I WANTED TO WRAP IT UP AS SOON AS I COULD.

I STILL HAD SOME-THING I HAD TO DO.

...THANKS TO NAGATO AND KOIZUMI'S EFFORTS, WE'D AVOIDED THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO.

WE'RE HOME!

BUT THERE WAS NO GUARANTEE IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

BACK AT THAT MYSTER-IOUS LODGE...

CHA (CLICK)

HELLO?

OH, KYON! WHAT IS IT?

RRR

PI (BEEP)

I HAD TO GO BACK TO THAT TIME...

YES... BACK TO THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 18TH.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN—?

WH-WHA—?

December 18th of last year.

HUH? WHERE?

THERE IS SOME-WHERE I WANT YOU TO GO WITH ME.

RIGHT NOW.

THE THREE OF US HAVE TO GO BACK ABOUT TWO WEEKS.

I WANT YOU TO TAKE ME AND NAGATO BACK IN TIME.

TELL THEM I WANT TO RETURN TO THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 18TH WITH YOU AND NAGATO.

JUST CONTACT YOUR SUPERIORS OR WHATEVER THEY ARE, RIGHT NOW.

NO, MY TP ...

ER, I MEAN, I CAN'T JUST USE IT WHENEVER I WANT.

Asa-hina-san.

...I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. WE HAVE PERMIS-SION.

BUT WHY... WHY SO EASILY...?

.....

I WAS WILL-ING TO BET ON IT.

WE'D GET PER-MIS-SION.

.....

J...JUST WAIT ONE MOMENT.

WAIT ...!

AH!

POI (TOSS)

Can you be there in half an hour?

Let's meet at Nagato's apartment.

Let me have an hour.

I want to confirm things again...

IT WAS BECAUSE THE FUTURE RESTED ON MY SHOULDERS.

BUT I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLAIN THAT.

POON (DOONG)

Come in.

It's me.

KYON, I JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND IT. WHY WAS YOUR REQUEST GRANTED SO EASILY?

I'LL EXPLAIN EVERY-THING. AT NAGATO'S PLACE.

BUT WHEN I ASKED FOR DETAILS, THEY WOULD NOT SAY ANY-THING...

NOT JUST THAT— I WAS ORDERED TO GO WITH YOU AND NAGATO, AS A GROUP.

NAGATO SEEMED UN-HURRIED.

KIII (CREEAK)

EARLIER, I'D LOST CONSCIOUSNESS AS I WATCHED A SHORT-HAIRED FIGURE IN A SCHOOL UNIFORM HOLDING A KNIFE.

DESPITE BEING AT HOME, SHE WAS WEARING HER SCHOOL UNIFORM.

LET ME EXPLAIN, SHALL I?

...SO, ASAHINA-SAN.

SO IT WOULD'VE BEEN WEIRD FOR HER TO BE WEARING ANYTHING OTHER THAN THAT NOW.

AND I NEVER NOTICED A THING...

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

HISTORY WAS COMPLETELY CHANGED?

THE ONLY ONE WITH AN ACCURATE MEMORY OF THOSE THREE DAYS WAS ME.

I UNDERSTOOD HER SURPRISE.

ZUZU (SIP)

TO HAPPEN SIMULTANEOUSLY, THAT'S...

A GLOBAL ALTERATION OF SPACE-TIME AND DIRECT INTERVENTION FROM THE FUTURE ...

I DIDN'T TELL HER ABOUT HER OTHER, OLDER SELF.

AND I DIDN'T TELL HER EVERYTHING.

ZUZU (SIP)

...ABOUT NAGATO'S ERRORS LEADING HER TO CHANGE THE ENTIRE WORLD.

I WASN'T CONFIDENT THAT I'D EXPLAINED EVERYTHING CORRECTLY ...

I WOULD'VE TOLD HER, BUT WHEN SHE ASKED THEM ABOUT IT, IT WAS "TOTALLY CLASSI-FIED."

AND IF NOT ASAHINA THE ELDER, THEN HER HIGHER-UPS.

I HAD TO ASSUME THAT THE OLDER ASAHINA WAS DELIBERATELY HIDING IT.

RIGHT NOW, KNOWLEDGE WAS BEING KEPT FROM HER.

THEY WEREN'T LETTING HER UNDERSTAND.

IT WASN'T THAT SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.

...BECAUSE HER FORMER SELF HAD GONE THROUGH ALL THESE EXPERIENCES.

ASAHINA-'SAN (BIG) MUST HAVE KNOWN ALL ABOUT THIS...

I DON'T KNOW WHY.

BUT THAT FITS THE FACTS.

FOR YOU, I'LL DO NEARLY ANYTHING.

WHAT IS IT?

I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU.

IF POS-SIBLE, NO.

NOT EVEN LIKE "HEY" OR "HI"?

I WANT YOU NOT TO SAY ANYTHING TO MYSELF IN THAT TIME.

IF YOU SAY SO, I WON'T.

OKAY, THEN.

ENTRYWAY'S A LITTLE SMALL FOR THREE PEOPLE

THE PREPA-RATIONS WERE COM-PLETE.

UM, DECEMBER 18TH OF LAST YEAR...

...HERE WE GO.

YUP.

THERE'S NO GETTING USED TO THIS KIND OF THING.

DO (WHUMP)

A SUDDEN SPIKE IN DIS-COMFORT ...!

IT'S LIKE FALLING UP INTO THE SKY.

uuuu

uuuu
(VWOOO)

...WE'RE HERE.

DO NOT WORRY

WHOA... WE'RE TOO CLOSE!

I'VE ERECTED A LIGHT AND SOUND ISOLATION FIELD.

WE ARE INVISIBLE TO THEM.

SHE LOOKS LIKE AN ADULT, BUT WHY IS SHE HERE?

UM... WHO IS THAT WOMAN?

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE REACHED THE CLIMACTIC SCENE ALREADY ...

BYU (WHIZ)

!?

WE COULD ONLY SEE HER FROM BEHIND, AFTER ALL.

ASAHINA HAD NO REASON TO THINK HER FUTURE SELF WOULD BE HERE.

BAN (WHAM)

GIRI (GRIP)

TAP

SHE REALLY WANTS TO KILL ME.

THERE'S NO HESITATION AT ALL...

KYON-KUN, YOU'RE -!?

EH- AH!?

HUH ...!?

NAGA-TO!

GON (GONG)

BARRIER DIS-SOLVED.

PO (POP)

DISSOLV-ING BARRIER ...

TA (DASH)

SO FAST ...!

WHY...

WHY... WOULD YOU!?

GIN (SHING)

KARAN (CLANK)

カラン!

カ!

KAN (CLANG)

KYON. KUUUN!

KYON-KUN!

I LOOK TER-RIBLE.

GEEZ!

SO YOU CAME.

IT GOT ME A LITTLE CHOKED UP.

BUT IF SHE SHOOK ME LIKE THAT, SHE WAS JUST GONNA MAKE ME DIE QUICKER.

WH...

WH...

WHY

...

I HAD PROMISED NAGATO.

I HAD NO WORDS FOR THIS NAGATO.

THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING I COULD SAY OR DO.

SORRY.

IT WAS A PAIN-FUL EXPE-RIENCE FOR ME TOO.

BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

THERE'S A REASON WE COULDN'T SAVE YOU FROM THAT.

JUST SLEEP FOR NOW.

OR SHOULD I SAY, I AL-READY KNOW THAT WE'RE GOING TO TAKE CARE OF THE REST. YOU'LL UNDER-STAND SOON ENOUGH.

WELL, WE'LL MAN-AGE TO TAKE CARE OF THE REST.

WASN'T THIS WHAT YOU WISHED FOR?

WASN'T THIS ...?

NO...

WHY?

WHY ...?

EVEN NOW

I MADE HER SLEEP.

SHE MUSTN'T LEARN THAT I AM HERE.

I HAD TO MAKE SURE THAT WOULD NOT HAP-PEN.

TON (TUP)

DDD

AH ...

7oo//
FU (WHF)

"MY" FACE LOOKED A LITTLE LESS PALLID.

SO IT HAD BEEN NAGATO WHO'D HEALED ME.

PA (SNATCH)

OH ...

GIVE IT.

THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I WAS SEEING THIS PART OF THE SEQUENCE.

HEY, WHOA ...

IS IT OVER?

.....

SO EASILY?

REQUEST SYNCHRO-NIZATION.

MuKuRI (FWuP)

THERE ARE TWO OF NAGATO ...

HOW MAGNI-FICENT.

REQUEST SYNCHRO-NIZATION.

...WHO'D GIVEN ME THE CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.

QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE OWNER OF THE HESITANT SMILE...

KYU (TUG)

THIS WAS THE NAGATO I KNEW SO WELL.

I SEE ...

.....

WHY?

RE-FUSED.

I DO NOT WISH TO.

IT WASN'T A LOGICAL DENIAL. INSTEAD, [illegible] SPOKEN WORDS OF EMOTIONAL REFUSAL.

[illegible] EXPRESSED A PREFERENCE?

I WAS STUNNED

.....

UNDER-
STOOD.

YOU WILL RESET THE WORLD CHANGES YOU CAUSED.

I AM STILL CONNECTED TO THE DATA OVERMIND IN MY OWN SPACE-TIME.

IT IS NOT HERE.

I CANNOT DETECT THE EXIS-TENCE OF THE DATA OVER-MIND.

AFTER THE REVERSION, TAKE WHATEVER ACTIONS YOU WISH.

I WILL EFFECT THE REVER-SION OF CHANG-ES.

UNDER...
STOOD.

THE ONE WHO MADE ME SO ANGRY BY CLAIMING THAT HER PUNISH-MENT WAS BEING DEBATED ...

THE NAGATO THAT APPEARED AT THE HOSPITAL THAT NIGHT— THAT'S HER.

THIS NAGATO IS THAT NAGATO.

...DOESN'T WANT TO TELL HER CURRENT SELF WHAT ACTION TO TAKE WHEN THE TIME COMES.

SHE...

I ALSO UNDERSTOOD WHY THE NAGATO THAT CAME FROM THE FUTURE WITH ME REJECTED SYNCHRONI-ZATION.

KYON-KUN.

PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HER... TO ME.

"THANK YOU."

THE WORDS SHE'D SPOKEN THEN ANSWERED EVERYTHING.

THERE WILL BE A LARGE THUNDERSTORM

DO I REALLY NEED TO EXPLAIN?

IF YOU SAY SO, I BELIEVE IT.

BUT HOW IS IT DIFFER-ENT?

I DON'T THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO KEEP OUR EYES OPEN THIS TIME.

THIS IS A LARGER AND MORE COMPLICATED TIME-QUAKE THAN THE ONE THAT JUST HAPPENED.

NOW, IN ADDITION TO THAT, WE MUST TAKE PAINS TO RESTORE TIME TO ITS ORIGINAL FLOW.

THE FIRST CHANGE ONLY CHANGED THE PAST AND PRESENT.

ON THE HOS-PITAL BED...

THE EVENING OF DE-CEMBER 21ST.

THINK BACK.

WHERE DO YOU REMEM-BER WAKING UP?

.....

IF YOU PLEASE, NAGATO-SAN.

THAT'S RIGHT. SO WE HAVE TO ARRANGE FOR THAT TO HAPPEN.

WAS HER LONELI-NESS MY IMAGI-NATION?

THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, NAGATO.

THIS WAS THEIR FINAL PART-ING.

I'LL GET HARUHI INVOLVED IF I HAVE TO.

I'LL GO ON A RAMPAGE, OKAY?

...I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET YOU BACK.

I'LL SAY THIS MUCH...

IF YOU DISAPPEAR, OR GO AWAY...

AND DON'T FORGET TO TELL YOUR BOSS TO DROP DEAD.

SO RELAX AND COME VISIT ME IN THE HOSPITAL.

KYON-KUN, CLOSE YOUR EYES.
WE CAN'T HAVE YOU GETTING TIME-SICK.
GEEZ.
ALL THIS JUMPING THROUGH TIME IS MAKING ME FEEL BUSY—
GUN (WHOOM)
WHOOOAAAAA!

UP UNTIL NOW IT HAD FELT LIKE AN AMUSEMENT PARK ROLLER COASTER.

BUT THIS WAS LIKE BEING INSIDE A SPACESHIP THAT WAS BLASTING RANDOMLY AROUND, AND I'D FORGOTTEN TO FASTEN MY SEAT BELT...

...WE'LL MATCH UP WITH THE TIME WHEN YOU DEPARTED.

A RED LAMP?

THE MAGNI-TUDE OF THE SPINNING SENSA-TION WAS DIFFERENT THIS TIME.

UUUUU (WHOOOO)

KYON-KUN...

...WHAT?

WHAT WAS THAT LIGHT?

THE FRONT GATE AT NORTH HIGH.

WAS THAT... AN AMBU-LANCE?

SHE LOOKS SO PALE...

ㅣㅣㅣㅣㅣㅣ

EVEN KOIZUMI ISN'T SMILING?

BE NICE TO ME, WON'T YOU?

IT WILL TAKE A WHILE BEFORE I WAKE UP.

HEH-HEH, YOU CAN EVEN KISS ME, IF YOU WANT.

NAGA-TO'S... NOT HERE ...

SIXTY-TWO SECONDS HAVE ELAPSED SINCE WE DEPARTED.

WE HAVE RETURNED.

TOSA (SLUMP)

...I SEE.

KO (CONK)

I WASN'T SO NAIVE AS TO TAKE THE OTHER ASAHINA'S WORDS LITERALLY.

IT WASN'T JUST BECAUSE NAGATO WAS WATCHING.

I'D FINALLY DEALT WITH ALL THE TROUBLE FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

KUU (PHEW)

IT WAS DELI-CIOUS, LIKE HAVING BARLEY TEA RIGHT AFTER A BATH.

KU?

KU?

KU?

KU (GULP)

A PART OF THOSE THREE DAYS THAT HADN'T BEEN IN MY MEMORY BEFORE.

AND I'D GOTTEN TO SEE SOMETHING GOOD.

"IT'S THE BRIGADE CHIEF'S DUTY TO WORRY ABOUT HER BRIGADE MEMBERS."

WHAT, HAD YOU SAID, HARUHI?

IT WOULD'VE BEEN NICE TO CRAWL INTO A FUTON NEXT TO ASAHINA LIKE I'D DONE BEFORE, BUT...

NAGATO, DO ME A FAVOR AND TAKE CARE OF HER UNTIL SHE WAKES UP, OKAY?

UNDER-STOOD.

...IT WAS KIND OF NICE THAT THE TIME TRAVELER WAS CRASHING AT THE ALIEN'S PLACE.

SORRY WE CAUSED SO MUCH TROUBLE.

SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW.

GOOD WORK TODAY.

BATAN (SHUT)

KU (CREAK)

KU

KU

IT IS FINE.

I WAS THE CAUSE.

...OR PERHAPS FORTU-NATELY, SHE WAS AS IMPASSIVE AS EVER.

I HAD WONDERED IF SHE MIGHT SMILE, BUT UNFORTU-NATELY...

I WATCHED THE ALIEN UNTIL THE DOOR CLOSED.

..YOU CAN THANK MY KEEN EYES FOR NOTICING THAT THERE WAS A HINT OF SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

BUT STILL.

SOMEHOW I GOT THE FEELING THAT THE DREAMS I HAD IN MY EXHAUSTED SLEEP WERE REALLY GREAT ONES.

I'M SURE IT WAS ABOUT AN ALIEN AND A TIME TRAVELER ENJOYING A PLEASANT TEA TOGETHER.

THIRTY SECONDS AFTER I WOKE UP, I'D FORGOTTEN THEM ENTIRELY, BUT THE LINGERING FEELING TOLD ME ENOUGH.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA — ANOTHER DAY : END

KIIN (CLANK)

WAAAA (CHEER)

WAI (CHATTER)

WAI

THE CHEAP CONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS MADE THE BITTERLY COLD WINTER SEEM EVEN MORE FRIGID.

AND THE EVENTS OF THIS STORY HAPPENED NOT LONG AFTER I'D STARTED TRUDGING UP THE HILL TO SCHOOL AGAIN.

WINTER VACATION HAD ENDED WITHOUT MUCH INCIDENT.

HPP

SAAA (WHOOSH)

!!

THERE WAS NO ANSWER WHEN I KNOCKED ON THE CLUB-ROOM DOOR, AND WHEN I OPENED IT...

CHA (CLICK)

WHAT COULD THIS BE?

SUCH A MOOD HARDLY SUITED HER.

SFX: ASE (FLUSTERED)

KYON-KUN, WHEN DID YOU...?

あせっ

EH? AH!

ER, YES?

WELL, I DID KNOCK.

あせっ

ASE

ひぃ!

BIKU (JUMP)

ASA-HINA-SAN?

SUZU-MIYA-SAN'S NOT WITH YOU?

IT WOULD'VE BEEN NICE TO ADMIRE HER FOR A BIT LONGER.

I'M SORRY!

GOOD-NESS, I DIDN'T NOTICE AT ALL.

OH, DID YOU?

I SEE ...

SHE'S PROB-ABLY IN THE MUSIC ROOM NOW.

SHE'S GOT CLASS-ROOM CLEAN-ING DUTY.

HER CONSTANT SUN-FLOWER-LIKE SMILE MIGHT'VE BEEN PARTIALLY MY DELUSION, BUT...

ASAHINA DEFI-NITELY SEEMED ODD TODAY.

I COULD NOT HELP BUT WONDER WHAT WAS UP.

U-UM, KYON-KUN...

...EVERY-THING ABOUT HER NOW OVERFLOWED WITH ENNUI.

IT WAS WEIRD...

PARA (FLIP)

GI (SQUEAK)

GACHA (CLACK)

I HAVE A FAVOR TO...

I'LL GO TOO!

WE CAN'T HAVE YOU GIVING NON-MEMBERS A FREE SHOW WITH THAT OUTFIT.

TA (TAP)

OH... PLEASE WAIT!

NO, I'LL JUST GO.

A MAID AND HER MASTER?

WHAT THE HECK?

BUT IT'S COLD OUT-SIDE...

THE WATER FOUN-TAIN'S NOT FAR, SO IT WON'T TAKE LONG...

NO, IT'S FINE.

KYUN (MELT)

...WALKING AROUND THE SCHOOL WITH AN IDOL LIKE THIS.

IT DIDN'T FEEL BAD AT ALL...

TEA IS MY RESPON-SIBILITY!

EVIDENTLY SHE STILL WASN'T COMFORTABLE BEING ALONE WITH NAGATO.

WHAT IS IT?

KO (CLANK)

UM, KYON-KUN?

THERE'S SOMEPLACE I'D LIKE TO GO WITH YOU.

ARE YOU FREE THIS SUNDAY?

JAAAAAA (SHAAAA)

...REALLY?

I WANTED TO RAISE BOTH HANDS AND STRIKE A HEROIC POSE, EXCEPT I DO HAVE SOME ABILITY TO LEARN FROM THE PAST.

UH, OF COURSE.

BUT, ASA-HINA-SAN...

BUT OUR DESTINATION HAD BEEN THREE YEARS IN THE PAST.

I'M SORRY, KYON-KUN.

TO THREE YEARS AGO.

I'D GOTTEN A SIMILAR INVITATION BEFORE.

I, UM... JUST WANT TO BUY SOME TEA LEAVES AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE.

WILL YOU HELP ME PICK SOME OUT, KYON-KUN?

WE WON'T GO TO THE PAST OR THE FUTURE.

NO, DON'T WORRY.

KYUUN (SWOON)

AND DON'T TELL ANY-ONE... OKAY?

YES, IT HAD TO BE.

UGH, YOU'RE BEING GROSS, DUDE

HEH HEH HEH

WASN'T THIS ESSENTIALLY WHAT MOST PEOPLE WOULD CALL A "DATE"?

WHY DO THE HANDS OF THE CLOCK MOVE SLOWER WHEN YOU STARE AT THEM?

SUNDAY FINALLY ARRIVED.

THIS WAS NO GOOD. MY THOUGHTS WERE STARTING TO FAVOR WEIRDER EXPLA-NATIONS.

IF THE GIRL WAITING FOR ME IN FRONT OF THE STATION WAS ASAHINA THE ELDER, THAT WOULD'VE BEEN ANOTHER MATTER ENTIRELY...

KYON-KUN!

H-HEY ...

TA (TAP)

TA

SORRY I KEPT YOU WAITING.

NOT AT ALL. IT'S STILL FIFTEEN MINUTES EARLY.

I JUST GOT HERE MYSELF ...

POWAA (DAZED)

THE SUBTLE BEAUTY OF A GIRL TRYING TO LOOK MORE GROWN-UP MOVED ME TO TEARS, AND MADE MY KNEES WEAK...

HER OUTFIT WAS CHIC AND FEMININE WHILE SEEMING A BIT PRECO-CIOUS.

DA (FWIP)

WELL, SHALL WE GO?

WEL-
COME.

HELLO!

OH, THAT'S RIGHT! ABOUT WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT BEFORE...

HMM, WHICH ONE SHALL I GET TODAY...?

ASAHINA-SAN TOOK HER TEA LEAVES VERY SERIOUSLY.

...IF YOU CHANGE THE TIMING A BIT, THE FLAVOR WILL...

OH, RIGHT! ABOUT THAT...

NO ONE IN THE SOS BRIGADE, INCLUDING ME, KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT TEA.

I STOOD THERE USE-LESSLY, LIKE A SCARE-CROW.

I WAS IN HEAVEN.

I'LL JUST COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT.

BUT I DIDN'T MIND THAT ONE BIT.

SINCE WE CAME ALL THIS WAY, SHALL WE HAVE SOME TEA?

THE DUMP-LINGS HERE ARE DELI-CIOUS TOO.

AND THEY'LL LET US BREW THE TEA WE JUST BOUGHT.

WHAT!?

HERE.

LOOKS LIKE FUN.

NEITHER OUR TYRAN-NICAL BRIGADE CHIEF, OUR OMNI-POTENT ALIEN, NOR OUR MYSTER-IOUS ESPER WERE HERE.

IT WAS "JUST US TWO," IF I MAY VENTURE TO USE THE PHRASE.

THE DUMP-LINGS ARE TASTY. TEA'S GREAT TOO.

JUST WHAT I'D EXPECT FROM TEA YOU CHOSE.

SO DELI-CIOUS.

PHEW ...

REALLY?

I'M GLAD.

AND PRE-TENDING NOT TO NOTICE WAS GETTING TIRING.

I WAS IN HEAVEN... BUT THAT DIDN'T MEAN I WAS TOTALLY WORRY-FREE.

SHE WOULD GLANCE AT HER WATCH AND SIGH...

SHE SEEMED TO BE WORRIED ABOUT THE TIME.

F7 CHIRA (GLANCE)

WAS SOME NEW INCIDENT ABOUT TO FOLLOW...?

SO THIS SHOPPING TRIP DID HAVE SOME KIND OF REASON BEHIND IT.

NO, I CAN'T JUST...

YOU CAME OUT BECAUSE I ASKED YOU TO.

SO JUST LET ME—

IT'S FINE!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

HUH?

OH, KYON-KUN, YOU DON'T NEED TO...

PLEASE.

THAT'S JUST BECAUSE OF OUR CLUB'S EVIL NATURE—

I MEAN, YOU'RE ALWAYS TREATING ME.

IT'S OKAY, REALLY!

JUST LET ME.

KYON-KUN...

WOULD YOU ACCOMPANY ME FOR A SHORT WALK?

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT SOME TIME BEFORE SUNSET.

KJIRU (FWIP)

THIS WAY, SHALL WE?

SURE.

I DON'T MIND.

SHE STARTED WALKING WITHOUT HESITATION.

SOMETHING WAS DEFINITELY UP WITH HER TODAY.

I WAS GOING TO ASK HER TO HANG OUT A BIT LONGER ANYWAY, BUT...

...IT WAS BEWILDERING TO HAVE HER ONE STEP AHEAD OF ME LIKE THIS.

SHE SEEMED TO HAVE A DESTINATION IN MIND.

THUS OUR WALK CONTINUED FOR SOME TIME.

AS IF SHE WAS WORRIED ABOUT BEING FOLLOWED BY SOMETHING.

NO, THAT WASN'T IT...

HER GAZE FLICKED CONSTANTLY ACROSS OUR SURROUNDINGS.

THE PATH FELT SOMEHOW NOSTALGIC ...

OH.

IT FELT MORE LIKE SHE WAS TRYING TO MAKE SURE SHE DIDN'T MISS A CHECKPOINT.

AND THESE WERE THE BENCHES WHERE ASAHINA-SAN DELIVERED HER EXPLOSIVE REVELATION TO ME.

THIS WAS THE PATH WHERE THE SOS BRIGADE HELD ITS FIRST CITY-WIDE SEARCH FOR MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA.

MAY, LAST YEAR.

I SUDDENLY UNDERSTOOD WHY IT FELT FAMILIAR.

IT WAS THIS BENCH, WASN'T IT...?

I WAS FEELING RATHER EMOTIONAL, BUT ASAHINA-SAN DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE.

ISN'T IT TIME, YET...?

IT SHOULD HAPPEN ANY MOMENT NOW...

BUT...

KYON-KUN, THIS WAY.

TA (DASH)

ANY IDEA THAT THIS HAD BEEN A DATE NOW SEEMED LIKE A DISTANT MEMORY.

GEEZ. SHE DIDN'T EVEN SEEM TO REALIZE SHE'D BEEN SPEAKING ALOUD.

KAN (CLACK)

KAN

KAN

IT HAD TURNED INTO A REAL WALK.

A RAIL LINE RAN ALONGSIDE THIS ROAD. I'D WALKED IT WITH HARUHI.

WE HEADED FROM THE RIVERBANK PATH OVER THE LEVY AND ONTO THE PREFECTURAL ROAD.

TA (TAP)

AH!

THE FARTHER WE WENT, THE MORE MEMORIES RETURNED ...

WE'LL CROSS THE STREET.

ASA-HINA-SAN!

AH!

A BOY?

LOOKS LIKE MAYBE A FOURTH OR FIFTH GRADER...

KIKII (SCREECH)

YOU...

...STUPID LITTLE...!

DA (DASH)

GYAAA (SHRIEEEK)

ZOOM

GUKUA (JERK)

ZUSHAA (CRASH)

WHAT THE HELL KIND OF DRIVING WAS THAT?

SPEEDING THROUGH A RED LIGHT? THAT'S ATTEMPTED MURDER!

KA CANGRY?

THAT CRAZY BAS-TARD!

ASA-HINA-SAN, DID YOU CATCH THE LICENSE PLATE?

SO THAT'S WHY...

HUH?

THAT'S WHY I WAS CALLED...

I SEE... SO THAT WAS IT...

ARE YOU HURT?

OH...

SURE.

CAN YOU TELL ME YOUR NAME?

WHAT WAS THIS?

ASAHINA WAS UNUSUALLY SERIOUS.

I SEE ...

SO YOU'RE ...

...?

I DON'T REMEMBER EVER HEARING THAT NAME BEFORE.

FROM NOW ON...

LISTEN, YOU HAVE TO PROMISE ME.

...WITH AIRPLANES AND TRAINS AND BOATS TOO.

NO, MORE THAN THAT ...

WHETHER YOU'RE CROSSING THE STREET OR IN A CAR YOURSELF.

...NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, WATCH OUT FOR CARS.

SO YOU DON'T GET HURT, OR FALL, OR GET RUN OVER, OR DROWN.

ALWAYS BE CAREFUL.

PLEASE ...

PROMISE ME!

OKAY.

WHY WAS SHE SAYING ALL THIS STUFF?

THE BOY WAS JUST AS SHOCKED AS I WAS.

SU (SWSH)

PROM-ISE ME.

FOR SURE, OKAY?

I'LL BE CARE-FUL.

KURURI (TWIRL)

GOOD-BYE, THEN!

I'LL BE MORE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON.

PEKORI (BOW)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR SAVING ME.

HE SEEMED LIKE AN UNUSUALLY INTELLI-GENT KID.

?

...ASA-HINA-SAN?

I GUESS I WASN'T QUITE GROWN-UP MYSELF.

I'D FELT A SURGE OF JEALOUSY WHEN THEY'D MADE THEIR PINKY PROMISE, WHICH I KEPT TO MYSELF.

ZURURU (DRAG)

ASAHINA-SAN, THE SIGNAL'S GONNA CHANGE SOON.

WE CAN'T STAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET ...

SHE DIDN'T MOVE.

UP YOU GO.

ZU (SLUMP)

C'MON, IT'S RED.

YOU HAVEN'T SEEMED LIKE YOURSELF ALL DAY.

WHAT'S BEEN UP WITH YOU TODAY?

...UHH...

SO I WOULDN'T MIND YOU TELLING ME WHAT'S UP.

EVEN IF YOU HAD A JOB TO DO, IT'S DONE NOW.

WH-WHAT'S WRONG?

ASA-HINA-SAN, WHY...?

WAAAH!

WAAAH...

BUT THIS MAXED OUT MY CONFUSION LEVEL.

I'D FACED ALL SORTS OF INCOMPRE-HENSIBLE SITUATIONS SO FAR.

I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND, BUT WE SAVED THAT BOY, DIDN'T WE?

UH! UH!

ASAHINA-SAN, WAIT...

...WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

OR IS IT JUST BECAUSE IT WAS SO SHOCKING ...

NO.

NOBODY DIED.

SHOULDN'T YOU BE HAPPY INSTEAD OF SAD?

...I'M JUST SO PATHE-TIC...

IT'S NOT THAT.

I DIDN'T UNDER-STAND ANY-THING ...

I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING ...

WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE?

TODAY'S PSEUDO-DATE HAD COME TO AN END.

MYSTERIES ABOUNDED, BUT I KNEW ONE THING FOR CERTAIN.

THE MELANCHOLY OF MIKURU ASAHINA I : END

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, WATCH OUT FOR CARS.

WHAT WAS GOING ON WITH HER ...?

WHY WAS SHE SO SERI-OUS?

AIRPLANES AND TRAINS AND BOATS TOO.

ALWAYS BE CARE-FUL.

PROM-ISE ME!

EGU (SOB)

...I'M JUST SO PATHE-TIC...

I DIDN'T UNDER-STAND ANY-THING...I COULDN'T DO ANY-THING...

THAT DIDN'T REALLY TELL ME ANYTHING.

ANYWAY, WE COULDN'T STAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET.

WHAT WAS THIS ABOUT...?

UH, CAN YOU WALK?

MAYBE WE SHOULD GO SOMEWHERE ELSE.

SOME-WHERE YOU COULD CALM DOWN A LITTLE.

A RESPITE FROM THE COLD WOULD'VE BEEN NICE TOO.

WE NEEDED SOMEPLACE WHERE WE COULD REST, OUT OF SIGHT.

...BUT SITTING ACROSS FROM A SOBBING LASS IN A CAFÉ DIDN'T SOUND PARTICULARLY COMFORTABLE.

MY FIRST THOUGHT WAS TO GO TO A CAFÉ...

SO THERE WAS ONLY ONE PLACE LEFT.

THE PARK— THAT MECCA FOR WEIRDOS OF ALL KINDS.

I COULD SEE NAGATO'S SWANKY APART-MENT.

BUT I FELT LIKE NOW WAS NOT THE BEST TIME TO GO OVER THERE.

I WAS STARTING TO REGRET NOT BRINGING A HAND-KERCHIEF TODAY OF ALL DAYS.

.....

TOSU (THUMP)

MAYBE IF I RIPPED MY SHIRT SLEEVE OFF...

I'M SORRY.

WHAT ABOUT SOME OOLONG TEA?

WANT ME TO GET YOU A CAN OF COFFEE?

I DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE, BUT NOW I DO.

THAT WAS IT. THAT WAS ALL.

THE REASON I ASKED YOU ALONG WAS TO SAVE THAT BOY.

THE PLACES WE WENT, THE PATHS WE TOOK, THE TIMING— IT WAS ALL ON THEIR ORDERS.

I...ASKED YOU OUT ON THE ORDERS OF MY SUPERIORS.

CAN I JUST ASK SOME-THING?

THAT WAS MY DUTY.

...SO WE WOULD BE ABLE TO SAVE THAT BOY.

LIKE JUST GO TO A CERTAIN INTERSECTION, AND PROTECT SO-AND-SO AT A CERTAIN TIME.

WHY DON'T THOSE SO-CALLED SUPERIORS OF YOURS GIVE YOU A LITTLE MORE DETAIL?

THEY WON'T TELL ME ANY-THING.

BUT IT'S NO GOOD.

UM... I WISH THEY WOULD TELL ME TOO.

WA (SOB)

I'M SURE THAT'S NOT TRUE...

NO, IT'S TRUE!

FUMYAN (SNIFFLE)

I'M SURE IT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH...

ALL I CAN DO IS FOLLOW ORDERS. JUST LIKE TODAY...

BY THE WAY ...

...WHO WAS THAT KID?

.....

GUSU GUSU (SNIFF)

GUSUN ~ (SNIFFLE)

THEY'D NEVER GIVE ME SUCH AN IMPORTANT MISSION ... UNLESS IT WERE TRUE. WITHOUT ANY DETAILS ...

WHY ...? IT'S JUST ...

HE MUST CONTINUE TO EXIST.

HE'S THE REASON I'M ABLE TO VISIT THIS TIME PERIOD.

HE IS A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON FOR US IN THE FUTURE.

IN ORDER TO STOP THAT, ASAHINA HAD BEEN GIVEN ORDERS ...

...TO BRING ME TO A CERTAIN PLACE.

IF I'D BEEN A SECOND SLOWER IN CATCHING THAT GLASSES-WEARING BRAT, HE WOULD'VE BEEN HIT HEAD-ON.

WHAT IF I HADN'T BEEN THERE ... HUH?

IN OTHER WORDS, THAT KID COULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO DIE.

I'D SAVED THE BOY. THAT WAS REALITY NOW.

WAIT A SECOND— WHICH HISTORY WAS THE RIGHT ONE?

NO, THAT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE.

AND TO AVOID THAT, ASAHINA-SAN HAD USED ME TO SAVE HIM.

WAS THE FUTURE ASAHINA-SAN CAME FROM THE ONE WHERE THE BOY HAD BEEN HIT?

SO WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

OTHERWISE, IT MEANT THAT ASAHINA-SAN'S FUTURE WAS DIS-CONTINUOUS FROM THE PRESENT.

WHAT HAD HAPPENED WAS NOW HISTORICAL FACT.

SO, UH...

?

WE ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES WHO HAVE COME FROM THE FUTURE.

!?

SO...

THERE ARE OTHERS WHO DO NOT WISH FOR OUR FUTURE TO EXIST.

YOU DON'T MEAN...LIKE RYOUKO ASAKURA?

SHE WAS FROM A DIFFERENT FACTION WITHIN THE DATA OVERMIND.

AND THERE WAS THE CREATOR OF THAT HOUSE WE'D ENCOUNTERED IN THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS.

IT HAD BEEN A MYSTERIOUS DIMENSION THAT EVEN NAGATO COULDN'T ANALYZE.

ALSO, THERE WAS ANOTHER ORGANIZATION BESIDE'S KOIZUMI'S "AGENCY."

THE SOS BRIGADE HAS ENEMIES.

WHICH ONE OF THEM HAD DONE THIS?

"ENEMY"... I DIDN'T LIKE THAT WORD.

"OTHERS WHO DO NOT WISH FOR OUR FUTURE TO EXIST"...

WHO ARE THEY?

I... CAN'T TELL YOU NOW.

NOT... NOT YET.

THAT'S NOT TRUE.

SHE WASN'T USELESS AT ALL.

SHE WAS JUST BEING PRE-VENTED FROM DOING ANY-THING.

KUSUN (SNIFF)

THAT'S WHAT'S SO PATHE-TIC.

I'M JUST...

I CAN'T DO ANYTHING. THEY WON'T LET ME UNDERSTAND ANYTHING.

"YOU HAVE TO KEEP ME A SECRET FROM HER."

THE ONE STANDING IN HER WAY WAS HER OWN FUTURE SELF.

...BUT I CAN'T TELL HER THAT.

HA (PANT)

HA

BUT THERE WERE A FEW THINGS I WANTED TO TELL ASAHINA-SAN (BIG).

SO LONG AS I DIDN'T KNOW, I COULDN'T TELL ASAHINA-SAN ANY-THING.

HOW LONG WOULD I HAVE TO KEEP THIS SECRET?

LIKE, DIDN'T SHE THINK SHE WAS BEING TOO HARD ON THE CURRENT ASAHINA-SAN?

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA?

BUT THAT ASAHINA-SAN HERSELF DIDN'T KNOW.

BUT THAT MEANS FUTURE SHE DID KNOW...

OH REALLY?

IT'S STRICTLY PROHIBITED FOR PEOPLE FROM THE FUTURE TO INTERFERE DIRECTLY.

EVEN BEFORE, KYON-KUN, YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAVED THAT BOY, RIGHT?

ANYTHING ELSE IS AGAINST THE RULES...

THE ONLY ONES WHO MAY CHANGE THE PAST ARE THOSE WHO LIVE WITHIN IT.

IT'S BECAUSE I'M SO USELESS, I KNOW IT!

THAT'S NOT TRUE!

I'VE WRITTEN MESSAGES, TRYING TO GET THEM TO TELL ME, BUT THEY'RE ALWAYS REJECTED.

I JUST DID WHAT MY SUPERIORS TOLD ME TO DO, WITHOUT KNOWING ANYTHING.

YOU'RE NOT USELESS!

YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR ME, FOR THE SOS BRIGADE, AND FOR THE WORLD.

YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT LIKE THIS.

BUT ALL I EVER DO IS WEAR A BUNCH OF DIFFERENT OUTFITS...

AND EVEN THEN I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ...

YOU'RE WRONG.

I WAS ABOUT AS SERIOUS AS I EVER GET.

ASAHINA-SAN SEEMED TO REALIZE THAT.

SHE HAD GIVEN ME THE HINT THAT HAD ALLOWED ME TO RETURN WITH HARUHI FROM CLOSED SPACE

SNOW WHITE.

TANABATA, THREE YEARS AGO.

IT WAS ASAHINA-SAN TRAVELING BACK IN TIME WITH ME THAT LET ME MEET UP WITH THE WAITING NAGATO, TO AID HER

AND SHE'D HELPED ME RESTORE HISTORY AFTER IT HAD BEEN ALTERED.

IF THERE WAS SOMETHING THIS ASAHINA-SAN NEEDED TO KNOW, THE ELDER ASAHINA WOULD HAVE LONG SINCE TOLD HER.

THE FACT THAT SHE HADN'T MEANT THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD TELL HER EITHER.

WHO WAS IT THAT HAD BEEN THERE?

I COULDN'T VERY WELL SAY.

AND THE ONE GIVING THOSE ORDERS WAS ASAHINA-SAN (BIG).

IT WAS CLEAR THAT THIS ASAHINA-SAN COULD ONLY MOVE ACCORDING TO THE ORDERS FROM HER HIGHER-UPS.

THEN SHE WOULD TRAVEL BACK IN TIME AGAIN, OLDER THIS TIME, TO HELP US.

IT ALL CONNECTED.

THIS ASAHINA-SAN WOULD EVENTUALLY RETURN TO THE FUTURE.

IF THE ELEMENTS WERE ALTERED, THE FUTURE WOULD NATURALLY CHANGE.

THE FUTURE EXISTED BECAUSE OF THE PRESENT.

...THAT'S IT!

I'VE JUST REALIZED SOMETHING!

"THAT'S CLASSIFIED."

WHAT I WAS FEELING NOW WAS SURELY THE SAME THING SHE'D FELT THEN.

I WANTED TO SAY SOMETHING, BUT I COULDN'T.

I COULDN'T TELL HER.

YOU'RE NOT JUST SOME TOY FOR HARUHI...

YOU'RE... HOW DO I PUT THIS...

UM... LOOK...

KYON-KUN, IT'S OKAY.

UHH MMM ...

LIKE, THERE'S MORE BENEATH THE SURFACE, OR IN THE BACK-GROUND, OR...

AH... UMM.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING, REALLY.

IT'S OKAY.

I UNDER-STAND.

IT'S ENOUGH.

...OH.

...

I SEE!

SHE UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE'S SOMETHING I KNOW THAT I CAN'T TELL HER.

WHY COULDN'T I SAY IT?

IF SHE'D RESEARCHED THE QUESTION, SHE WOULD KNOW THAT THERE WEREN'T MANY POSSIBLE ANSWERS.

IT WAS SOMETHING THAT WOULD TAKE HER FEELING OF POWER-LESSNESS AND THROW IT FAR, FAR AWAY.

YEAH.

OKAY.

WE DIDN'T NEED ANY MORE WORDS.

SHE'D RECEIVED WHAT I COULDN'T SEND.

I KNEW SHE HAD.

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU SIMPLY DON'T NEED THEM.

THERE WERE TRULY NO MORE WORDS NECES-SARY.

ASAHINA-SAN SMILED.

AND I RETURNED HER SMILE.

OUR FEELINGS MADE UP FOR WHAT OUR WORDS COULDN'T EXPRESS.

THAT WAS ENOUGH.

THE NEXT DAY, MONDAY.

EVERYBODY GATHERED IN THE SOS BRIGADE HEAD-QUARTERS AS USUAL.

AFTER SCHOOL.

SO I'M JUST GOING TO TALK TO MYSELF HERE.

YOU MIGHT OVER-HEAR ME, BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

FIRST I'VE HEARD OF IT.

HEY, KYON. I HAVE THIS STRANGE HABIT OF TALKING TO MYSELF...

...WITH-OUT PAYING ATTENTION TO THE PEOPLE AROUND ME.

HIS NAME'S ...

HE WEARS THESE GLASSES LIKE A MINI-PROFESSOR AND HAS A REALLY WIMPY-LOOKING FACE.

SO A LITTLE WAYS FROM MY HOUSE, THERE'S THIS REALLY SMART KID.

...."I SAW THE BUNNY GIRL WITH A BOY."

AAANYWAY, SOMETIMES I HELP THE LITTLE GUY STUDY.

AND YESTER-DAY HE SAYS TO ME...

PIRA (FLIP)

AND HERE'S THE COMPO-SITE SKETCH.

AND I HAPPENED TO ASK ABOUT THE BOY HE SAW WITH HER.

AND HE REMEM-BERED MIKURU IN HER BUNNY OUTFIT.

APPARENTLY, HE SAW US WHEN WE WERE DOING LOCATION SHOOTS FOR THE MOVIE LAST FALL.

WASN'T HE SUPPOSED TO BECOME A SCIENTIST OR SOMETHING?

DON'T WORRY, I WON'T GET ANGRY.

THAT LOUD-MOUTH BRAT WAS SURPRISINGLY GOOD AT DRAWING.

BIRI

BIRI (RIP)

TELL ME EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID AND WHERE YOU WENT WITH MIKURU YESTERDAY.

GO (RUMBLE)

GO

GO

GO

BA (WHAP)

UH, WELL ...

HUH!?

EXCUSE ME.

SPIT IT OUT!

EVERY LAST DETAIL!

OR I'LL GIVE YOU TWO A PUNISHMENT UNLIKE ANYTHING YOU'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE!

LIKE... THIS!

THERE'S NO NEED TO WASTE WORDS ON WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLUB-ROOM AFTER THAT.

FACED WITH HARUHI'S UNNATURAL, UNPLEASANT GRIN AND NAGATO'S COLDER-THAN-USUAL GAZE...

...I SEARCHED DESPERATELY FOR AN EXCUSE, WHILE ASAHINA-SAN PANICKED AS ALWAYS.

AREN'T THERE THINGS YOU UNDER-STAND WITHOUT ANY EXPLA-NATION?

DID YOU THINK YOU'D BE ABLE TO SMOOTH TALK YOUR WAY OUT?

THE MELANCHOLY OF MIKURU ASAHINA II : END

NO, NO, NO!

IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

BUWAWAN (FWSHHH)

GEEZ.

HOW'D WE WIND UP DOING THIS?

THE INTRO NEEDS SOME-THING FRESH, CATCHY!

"ONCE UPON A TIME" IS OVER-PLAYED!

THIS INTRO-DUCTION IS A TOTAL CLICHÉ.

IT'S NO GOOD?

IF WE DON'T GET THEM DONE AND EDITED SOON, WE WON'T MAKE THE PUBLICA-TION DEAD-LINE!

HURRY UP AND FINISH THOSE MANU-SCRIPTS!

BUZZ OFF

KYON, YOUR HANDS AREN'T MOVING AT ALL!

IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE WRITING EPICS OR AIMING FOR LITERARY PRIZES HERE.

カ… カ… カ…

KATA KATA KATA (CLACK)

TIME TO PICK UP THE PACE!

JUST THINK A LITTLE HARDER AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WRITE SOME-THING.

BAN (BAM)

SITTING THERE STARING AT THE SCREEN ISN'T GOING TO GET A SENTENCE WRITTEN.

JUST START WRITING!

編集!!

THEN PRINT IT OUT AND SHOW IT TO ME.

IF I THINK IT'S GOOD, IT PASSES.

AND IF NOT, I'LL TOSS IT!

© Editor in Chief★Full Speed Ahead!

KYON.

YOUR SIDE-KICKS ARE HERE.

IT WAS A DAY IN THE THIRD TERM OF SCHOOL AS THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE APPROACH-ING NEW YEAR WERE STARTING TO BECOME AUDIBLE.

THIS ALL STARTED A FEW DAYS EARLIER.

ARE YOU GOING TO EX-PLAIN?

NATU-RALLY. THAT IS WHY WE ARE HERE.

NOW THAT'S A STRANGE PAIRING.

SUMMONS.

SHOULDN'T HARUHI BE HERE?

SOMEHOW I FEEL LIKE I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT EITHER.

ACTU-ALLY...

IT'S BETTER THAT SHE ISN'T.

THIS IS NOT SOMETHING I WANT HER TO HEAR.

A-HA.

SO IT'S FINALLY COME.

WE'RE TO APPEAR IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL ROOM TODAY AFTER SCHOOL.

...WE'VE RECEIVED A SUMMONS FROM THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT.

AN ORDER TO APPEAR IN FRONT OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT.

I WASN'T SO NAIVE THAT I COULDN'T IMAGINE WHY SUCH A THING WOULD HAPPEN.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHY WE WERE BEING SUMMONED NOW ...

...BUT THERE WAS NO HELPING IT.

WAS THIS ABOUT THE TIME WE'D SCAMMED COMPUTERS FROM THE COMPUTER CLUB? OR ABOUT OUR EXCESSIVE MOVIE FILMING ACTIVITIES?

HEH HEH!

I DIDN'T KNOW HOW MANY EVIL DEEDS THE SOS BRIGADE HAD PERPETRATED, BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL, THIS PAST YEAR.

NO.

IT IS NOT SUZUMIYA WHO IS BEING SUMMONED.

I'M COUNTING ON YOU FOR MEDIA-TION.

I BET HARUHI'LL BE THRILLED TO GO MANO-A-MANO WITH THE PRESIDENT.

NO, IT IS NOT YOU.

IT'D BE RIDICULOUSLY UNFAIR TO MAKE ME BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE BACKLASH.

THEN WHO? ME?

C'MON, THAT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

...

WHAT!?

IT IS NAGATO ALONE WHO HAS BEEN SUM-MONED.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF THAT?

WHAT BUSINESS DOES THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT HAVE WITH NAGATO?

DON'T TELL ME THEY WANT TO MAKE HER SECRETARY.

OF COURSE NOT, SINCE THEY ALREADY HAVE A SECRETARY.

THEY WANT TO DISCUSS THE LITERATURE CLUB'S ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS ITS ONGOING EXISTENCE.

THE REASON IS QUITE SIMPLE.

THE LITERATURE CLUB, EH? SO THAT WAS HOW IT WAS GOING TO BE.

BUT THE CURRENT STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT WILL NOT BE SO EASY TO DEAL WITH.

THE LAST STUDENT COUNCIL DID JUST THAT.

NAGATO WAS THE ONLY PROPER MEMBER OF THE LITERATURE CLUB. WE WERE MERE FREE-LOADERS.

OR ILLEGAL OCCUPANTS.

I'M AMAZED THEY OVERLOOKED US THIS LONG.

THE SOS BRIGADE'S LONG OCCUPATION OF THE LITERATURE CLUB'S ROOM FOR ITS HEADQUARTERS WAS THE VERY EMBODIMENT OF THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE TENSE.

SFX: CHIRA (GLANCE)

"SORRY FOR CAUSING TROUBLE," EH?

NAGATO DIDN'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE.

...

THEY'RE WELL INFORMED.

WOULDN'T SHE BE MORE LIKELY TO SCARE THE CRAP OUT OF THEM IF SHE WENT ALONE?

BY THE WAY, WHY DO I HAVE TO GO TOO?

THEY DIDN'T SUMMON ME.

I WOULD BE QUITE HAPPY TO ACT AS NAGATO'S REPRESENTATIVE, BUT...

THAT'S WHY I WAS APPOINTED AS A MESSENGER.

I SUPPOSE ...

...TO PUT IT SIMPLY, YOU ARE SUZUMIYA-SAN'S REPRESENTATIVE.

FASA (FWISH)

...SHOULD THINGS GO POORLY, LATER THERE COULD BE PROBLEMS.

AND BEING HER AGENT IS NOT PART OF MY JOB DESCRIPTION.

HARUHI: WHAT'D YOU SAY!? WE'LL NEVER LET YOU HAVE IT!!

BUT THAT SEEMED IMPOS-SIBLE.

JUST MAKE HARUHI GO HERSELF, I WANTED TO SAY...

WE'LL MEET IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AFTER SCHOOL.

I'LL INFORM THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT.

WELL THEN, GOOD LUCK.

WE WERE ALL COOPERATING, BUT THE NUMBER OF SECRETS WE WERE KEEPING FROM HARUHI WAS INCREASING BY THE MONTH...

MAYBE KOIZUMI AND NAGATO WERE PERFECTLY COMFORTABLE BEING THE FACE OF THE SOS BRIGADE.

...WHY HE WAS ACTING AS THE STUDENT COUNCIL'S CARRIER PIGEON.

THANKS TO MY SENTIMENTALITY, I DIDN'T GET TO ASK KOIZUMI...

MAYBE I WAS BEING POINTLESSLY SENTIMENTAL.

GUESS THERE'S SOME KIND OF PROBLEM WITH MY GRADES.

DEPENDING ON THE FINAL EXAM RESULTS, THEY MIGHT EVEN BE NOTIFYING MY PARENTS.

WELL, OKABE WANTED ME TO SEE HIM.

WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO CALL ME OVER DURING THE LUNCH BREAK.

WHAT'S GOT YOU SO RESTLESS?

DON'T ASSUME I'VE GOT YOUR BRAIN.

WERE YOUR GRADES THAT BAD?

I THOUGHT YOU WERE MORE SERIOUS ABOUT LISTENING IN CLASS THAN I WAS.

HMM.

SHOULD I HELP YOU OUT WITH STUDY-ING, THEN?

HUH?

I DON'T MIND.

WE'D JUST BE GOING OVER THE CLASS MATERIAL AGAIN.

DON (WHAM)

I MEAN, MIKURU'S BEEN FREAKING OUT TOO, RIGHT?

KUDO

IF THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE GONNA DO, THEY SHOULD MOVE THE CLASS TRIP TO FRESHMAN YEAR. AND THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL SHOULD BE IN SPRING, NOT FALL, AM I RIGHT?

KUDO

THEY'VE GOT ALL THOSE SPECIAL CLASSES AND MOCK EXAMS AND EVERYTHING, AND IT TURNS THEIR BIG CLASS TRIP INTO A TOTAL MESS.

KUDO

THIS SCHOOL'S JUST A PREFECTURAL PUBLIC SCHOOL, BUT THIS TIME OF YEAR THEY GET ALL WEIRD AND START ACTING LIKE A PREP SCHOOL. IT'S REALLY HARD ON THE JUNIORS.

KUDO (BLAM)

KUDO

HM.

I'LL FIGURE OUT THE REST MYSELF.

YEAH, MAYBE IF YOU JUST HELPED ME OUT ON THE THINGS I DON'T GET...

WHY'S SHE GET-TING RILED UP ALL OF A SUD-DEN?

GATA (CLATTER)

IF YOU COULD FIGURE OUT THE REST YOURSELF, WOULDN'T YOU HAVE DONE IT ALREADY?

BAN (BAM)

I WON'T ALLOW THE KIND OF SCANDAL THAT WOULD COME FROM A MEMBER OF THE SOS BRIGADE FAILING OUT OF SCHOOL!

THAT'D GIVE THE STUDENT COUNCIL ALL THE AMMUNITION THEY'D NEED TO COME DOWN ON US.

YOU'RE TOO PERCEPTIVE.

GOT IT?

I NEED YOU TO BE JUST A TINY BIT MOTIVATED, SO THEY DON'T GET THAT OPENING.

SO!

TRUTH BE TOLD, NOW THAT I WAS HERE, I WAS FEELING PRETTY NERVOUS.

AFTER SCHOOL.

SIGN: STUDENT COUNCIL ROOM

TO BE CALLED "PRESIDENT," I FIGURED YOU'D HAVE TO BE AN UPPER-CLASSMAN OF SOME KIND.

HE HAD TO BE AT LEAST A JUNIOR.

WHAT KIND OF GUY WAS THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT?

HEY, KYON-KUN!

WHAT YA DOIN'?

TSU-RUYA-SAN.

...BE A STUDENT COUNCIL SPY?

WHAT'S THIS? COULD YOU POSSIB-LY...

TA CDASHD

I JUST KINDA OVER-HEARD SOME-THING, Y'KNOW?

GUESS THAT'S TRUE!

SORRY FOR DOUBTIN' YA!

UH, WELL...

IF I WERE A SPY, I WOULDN'T BE GOING TO ALL THIS TROUBLE.

SIGN: STUDENT COUNCIL ROOM

生徒会室

I HEAR IT EVEN GOES BACK TO THE LAST ELECTION FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT.

KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE RUMOR THAT THE STUDENT COUNCIL'S BEEN OVERRUN WITH PEOPLE MAKING SECRET DEALS BEHIND THE SCENES?

ANYWAY, TSURUYA-SAN... ...WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT?

INTRIGUE LIKE THAT AT OUR SHABBY LITTLE PUBLIC SCHOOL?

THIS'S THE FIRST I'VE HEARD OF IT.

I DON'T REALLY KNOW HIM VERY WELL. HE'S IN A DIFFERENT CLASS AND ALL.

HE'S SORTA STUCK UP BUT ALSO HANDSOME AND PRETTY SMART, FROM WHAT I HEAR.

HE'S MEGA-SUSPICIOUS!

IF HE WERE A CHARACTER IN *THE ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS*, HE'D BE SIMA YI.

SINCE THE LAST STUDENT COUNCIL WAS OUT OF TOUCH... TOTAL PIE-IN-THE-SKY.

HE'S CONSTANTLY WORKING FOR MORE STUDENT INDEPENDENCE.

AS USUAL, SHE'D GOTTEN TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER WITHOUT ME SAYING ANYTHING.

THAT WAS CER-TAINLY REAS-SURING.

TA (TAP)

I'M AN ALLY TO ALL IN HARU-NYAN'S CLUB!

IF YOU'RE GONNA WRESTLE WITH THE STUDENT COUNCIL, I'VE GOT YOUR BACK!

SIGN: STUDENT COUNCIL ROOM

生徒会室

IT WAS A SAFE BET THAT HER LAST WORDS HAD BEEN AUDIBLE THROUGH THE DOOR.

ENTER.

KON (KNOCK)

KON コン

TIME TO GIRD MY LOINS AND DO THIS.

MR. PRESIDENT, WE'VE ALL ARRIVED.

IF YOU'LL EXPLAIN ...

VERY WELL.

I BELIEVE YOU HAVE ALREADY HEARD THIS FROM KOIZUMI, BUT I'LL SAY IT AGAIN.

KI (TNK)

THE STUDENT COUNCIL IS GIVING THE LITERATURE CLUB ITS FINAL NOTICE.

THE REASON ALL OF YOU ARE HERE IS QUITE SIMPLE.

BI (JAB)

YOU ARE NO LONGER A FUNCTIONING STUDENT ORGANIZA-TION...

ANOTHER WEIRD CHARACTER APPEARS.

DON (BAM)

CURRENTLY YOU ARE THE LITERATURE CLUB IN NAME ONLY.

IS THIS CORRECT?

THAT IS THE CONCLUSION TO WHICH OUR INVESTIGATION HAS LED US.

WE OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL DO NOT CURRENTLY SEE ANY PURPOSE IN THE EXISTENCE OF THE LITERATURE CLUB.

I'LL BE CLEAR.

YOU WILL PROMPTLY VACATE THE CLUB-ROOM!

BA (WHAP)

THUS, I AM INFORMING YOU OF THE IMMEDIATE AND INDEFINITE SUSPENSION OF THE LITERATURE CLUB.

AND YOU'VE DONE NOTHING, ALLOWING THEM TO STAY THERE.

NAGATO-KUN, WAS IT?

THERE ARE NON-CLUB MEMBERS IN YOUR ROOM.

AND I WONDER WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH THE BUDGET PROVIDED TO THE LITERATURE CLUB THIS YEAR.

AND THE FILM ITSELF WAS MADE WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL'S ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE.

WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT THAT FILM COUNTS AS A LITERARY ACTIVITY?

THAT BEGINS MUST END.

YOU WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE CLUB-ROOM UNTIL SUCH TIME AS NEW MEMBERS CAN BE RECRUITED NEXT YEAR.

ARE THERE ANY COM-PLAINTS?

YOU ARE EFFEC-TIVELY THE CLUB PRESIDENT, SO WE WILL HEAR THEM.

THE LITERATURE CLUB'S ACTIVITIES WILL BE TEMPO-RARILY SUSPENDED.

BAN (WHAM)

HMPH.

.....

IS NAGATO... SILENTLY FURIOUS?

NO OBJEC-TIONS, THEN.

IT'S LIKE A BAD JOKE.

IS THAT SO?

I'VE HAD A LOOK AT THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHMENT FORM YOU SUBMITTED.

IT'S NOT FAIR TO IGNORE US FOR SO LONG, THEN DROP THIS ON US OUT OF NOWHERE.

NOW WAIT JUST A SECOND.

YOU CAN'T JUST SAY STUFF LIKE THAT.

BAN (BAM)

IN FACT, YOU SHOULD PROBABLY DEVOTE YOURSELF MORE TO ACADEMICS IN GENERAL.

YOU SHOULD LEARN BETTER GRAMMAR.

THIS NONSENSE ABOUT THE LITERATURE CLUB WAS JUST A PRETENSE.

THE PRESIDENT'S REAL GOAL HAD BEEN DESTROYING THE SOS BRIGADE ALL ALONG.

SO THAT WAS IT.

I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAY-ING. AND YOU'RE RIGHT.

...AND HAS SIMPLY ACTED AS IT PLEASES.

IT WAS ESTAB-LISHED WITHOUT PER-MISSION ...

KO (TOK)

THE "SOS BRIGADE," WAS IT?

AND YET WE HAVE BEEN TOLERANT.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF BRINGING NAGATO IN AND THREATENING TO DISSOLVE THE LITERATURE CLUB?

IF THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, YOU SHOULD'VE JUST GONE STRAIGHT TO HARUHI.

BUT THIS IS DIRTY POOL!

AM I WRONG?

THE SOS BRIGADE DOES NOT EXIST AS A STUDENT ORGANIZA-TION.

IT SHOULD BE OB-VIOUS.

TRYING TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT DIDN'T EXIST DISAPPEAR WAS LIKE MULTIPLY-ING BY ZERO.

BECAUSE ADMINIS-TRATIVELY SPEAKING, NO SUCH BRIGADE EXISTED.

NO MATTER HOW HARD THE STUDENT COUNCIL TRIED, THEY COULD NOT DISSOLVE THE SOS BRIGADE.

...HAD IT REALLY COME TO THIS?

ATTACKING VIA THE LITERATURE CLUB.

...GOING AFTER THE THIRD FLOOR ROOM THAT THE SOS BRIGADE WAS ILLEGALLY OCCUPYING.

SO THEY STRUCK INDIRECTLY ...

UGH... NAGATO ...

THOUGH I DON'T SEE THAT YOU HAVE MANY CHOICES.

SO, WHAT WILL IT BE?

HA (GASP)

...HUH?

THE AURA I'D FELT FROM NAGATO HAD VANISHED ...

SIGN: SECRETARY

書記

WHAT?

K-KIMIDORI-SAN!?

IS THERE SOMETHING THE MATTER WITH THE STUDENT COUNCIL'S SECRETARY?

WHAT HAD BEEN HER TRUE REASON FOR COMING TO US?

I'D ASSUMED IT HAD BEEN NAGATO'S DOING, BUT..

KYON-SAN

THE GIRL AT THE CENTER OF THE CAVE CRICKET INCIDENT THAT HAD SPRUNG FROM AN ANOMALY ON THE SOS BRIGADE'S WEBSITE.

SHE'D CLAIMED TO BE THE COMPUTER CLUB PRESIDENT'S GIRLFRIEND, BUT HE CLAIMED NEVER TO HAVE HAD ONE.

WHAT KIND OF TELEPATHY IS GOING ON BETWEEN THESE TWO?

...BUMPING INTO HER AGAIN AND SEEING HER EXCHANGE LOOKS WITH NAGATO...

...I COULDN'T IMAGINE IT WAS A COINCIDENCE.

BAAN (SLAM)

HEY!

YOU PATHETIC STUDENT PRESIDENT!

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA, LOCKING UP MY FAITHFUL SERVANTS IN A ROOM LIKE THIS?

ARMBAND: BRIGADE CHIEF

WHO'RE YOUR "FAITHFUL SERVANTS"?

...BUT IF IT WAS GONNA BE THIS INTERESTING, YOU SHOULD'VE JUST TOLD ME!

I FIGURED YOU'D PULL SOMETHING SOONER OR LATER...

IF YOU ARE, I'LL NEVER LET YOU GET AWAY WITH IT!

AND WHAT'S THIS?

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GIVING YUKI A HARD TIME.

YOU CAN'T KEEP ME OUT OF THIS, YOU KNOW.

I'M THE SUPREME LEADER OF THE SOS BRIGADE!

UNEX-PECTEDLY, ALL THE PLAYERS WERE IN ONE PLACE.

AND WITH A CAST LIKE THIS, A GOOD OUTCOME SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE ...!

AND I WAS SURE IT WASN'T ME THIS TIME.

IT'S BRIGADE CHIEF VS. PRESIDENT, SO THE FIGHT MONEY'S EVEN!

SOMEONE HAD FLIPPED THE SWITCH FOR THIS UNFORTUNATE EVENT.

SO YOU'RE THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT?

VERY WELL, I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE.

締切厳守!!!

EDITOR ■ CHIEF ★ FULL SPEED AHEAD! ▮

HEADBAND: HIT THE DEADLINE!

IT'S SOS BRIGADE VS. STUDENT COUNCIL!

IT'S ALL-OUT WAR!

Ta-Dah!

BABAN (BABAM)

ARMBAND: BRIGADE CHIEF

YOU'LL RECEIVE NO MERCY TILL YOU WEEP AND KNEEL!

EVERY SINGLE MEMBER OF THE SOS BRIGADE IS A VALIANT WARRIOR!

I WARN YOU THAT WE'RE HAPPY TO TAKE ON ANY CHALLENGE!

HE'S THE MOST OBVIOUS ENEMY WE'VE EVER HAD!

IF WE DON'T DO Bbattle HERE, THEN WHERE WILL WE FIGHT!?

LOOK AT HER GO..

EIYAA (HIYAH)

KYON, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WE'RE UP AGAINST THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT!

JIRORI (GLARE)

BUT I'M NOT IN THE HABIT OF WALKING INTO A RING MY ENEMY'S PREPARED FOR ME.

IT IS THE EPITOME OF BARBARISM AND UNBECOMING.

KNOW THIS: THE STUDENT COUNCIL CANNOT ALLOW FIGHTS ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS, NO MATTER THE REASON.

CHIRA (GLANCE)

I DON'T KNOW WHAT SORT OF TECHNIQUES YOU'RE ACCUSTOMED TO USING IN YOUR FIGHTS.

KURU (FWIP)

MIKURU-CHAN.

SHE SAID SHE HEARD IT FROM TSURUYA-SAN.

WHO TOLD YOU WE WERE IN HERE?

PON (PAT)

HOLD ON, HARUHI.

"A-HA, THE STUDENT COUNCIL HAS FINALLY MADE ITS MOVE!" I THOUGHT.

DOOON (ZIIING)

AS SOON AS I HEARD THAT THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT HAD CALLED YOU GUYS IN, I CAME RIGHT OVER.

BISHI (JAB)

THEY KNEW THEY'D LOSE IF THEY WENT UP AGAINST ME, SO THEY ATTACKED OUR WEAK SPOT.

JUST THE KIND OF CHEAP MOVE I'D EXPECT FROM A PETTY VILLAIN.

YES, MR. PRESIDENT.

I DON'T NEED ANY EXPLANATIONS.

KOIZUMI-KUN, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN ... ...WHY IT WAS THAT I SUMMONED NAGATO.

BECAUSE IF YUKI'S NOT A CLUB MEMBER ANYMORE, THEN WE CAN'T USE THE ROOM.

POI (TOSS)

YOU'RE JUST TRUMPING UP CHARGES TO DESTROY THE LITERATURE CLUB.

ARMBAND: BRIGADE CHIEF

KIMI GA SHIZUMEKO

DON'T GET MOVED BY YOUR OWN SPEECH.

IF YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM WITH THE SOS BRIGADE, DON'T BOTHER WITH THIS SNEAKY CRAP, JUST SAY IT TO OUR FACES!

BUT I WON'T HAVE IT.

I'M THE BRIGADE CHIEF!

YOU PROBABLY FIGURED SINCE SHE'S SUCH A NICE, QUIET GIRL YOU'D BE ABLE TO JUST TALK CIRCLES AROUND HER.

I DON'T BELIEVE THE STUDENT COUNCIL HAS THE AUTHORITY TO UNILATERALLY SUSPEND THE CLUB WITHOUT A GRACE PERIOD.

HOWEVER, WE ARE STILL IN THE MIDST OF NEGO-TIATIONS.

THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME THE TIME OF EXPLAIN-ING.

IF THE LITERATURE CLUB WILL CONDUCT LITERARY ACTIVITIES, WE WOULD HAVE NO COMPLAINTS AT ALL.

NATU-RALLY NOT.

WE OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL DO NOT WISH TO CAUSE UNNECESSARY CONFLICT.

WHERE IS THIS CONVERSATION GOING?

DOES THAT MEAN WE HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE TO IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION?

WHAT WE FIND PROBLEMATIC IS THE FACT THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NO SUCH ACTIVITIES.

YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY ENGAGE IN AT LEAST ONE ACTIVITY BEFITTING THE LITERATURE CLUB.

IF YOU DO, WE'LL LIFT THE INDEFINITE SUSPENSION.

IT IS NOT AN ALTER-NATIVE, IT IS A REQUIRE-MENT.

DON (BOOM)

I KNOW OF NO SUCH BRIGADE.

I'D PREFER TO HEAR AS LITTLE TALK OF "BRIGADES" AS POSSIBLE.

SO YOU CAN SEE REASON, WILL YOU THEN. APPROVE THE SOS BRIGADE AS WELL?

BAN (CLASH)

THEN YOU SHOULD'VE JUST LEFT IT ALONE.

WE ARE DISCUSSING THE LITERATURE CLUB.

I'D LIKE NEVER TO BE TROUBLED BY THIS "BRIGADE" AGAIN.

...SUCH THINGS BELONG IN ELE-MENTARY SCHOOL.

USING THE ROOM FOR A READING GROUP, OR WRITING BOOK REPORTS ...

AS FOR THE LITERATURE CLUB, OBVIOUSLY NOT JUST ANY ACTIVITY WILL DO.

BOARD: CONDITIONS

KYU (SQUEAK)

UGH, THIS IS SUCH A PAIN.

BEATS ME.

KYON, WHAT DOES A LITERATURE CLUB EVEN DO BESIDES READING?

文芸部存続

KYU (SQUEAK)

JUST AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, YOU MUST DO SOMETHING LITERARY.

BOARD: CONDITIONS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE LITERATURE CLUB - CREATE A PUBLICATION

文芸部存続の条件
・機関誌の作成

YOU MUST CREATE A PUBLICA-TION.

PAST GENERATIONS OF THE LITERATURE CLUB HAVE ALL MANAGED TO CREATE AT LEAST ONE PUBLICATION A YEAR, EVEN DURING TIMES OF LOW MEMBERSHIP.

IT IS THE MOST VISIBLE ACTIVITY YOU CAN DO.

OF COURSE, ANYBODY ELSE WOULD'VE LEFT YOU ALONE INDEFINITELY.

BY ALL RIGHTS, WE SHOULD'VE GIVEN YOU NOTICE AT THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL.

ANY OBJEC-TIONS?

BEAR IN MIND THAT THIS IS THE MOST MINIMAL POSSIBLE CONCESSION.

BAN (BAM)

I WAS ELECTED TO THE STUDENT COUNCIL ON MY PROMISES FOR SCHOOL REFORM.

I CANNOT ALLOW IT.

IF I WERE TO PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGE SUCH A FRIVOLOUS ORGANIZATION, IT WOULD DESTROY MY REPUTATION.

AND I AM SERIOUS ABOUT THEM.

ONE WEEK FROM TODAY YOU MUST PRESENT TWO HUNDRED COPIES OF A LITERATURE CLUB NEWSLETTER.

IF YOU DO NOT, THE CLUB WILL BE SUSPENDED ...

YOU HAVE ONE WEEK.

I WILL HEAR NO OBJEC-TIONS ON THIS MATTER.

...AND THE ROOM VACATED.

PUBLI-CATION, PUBLI-CATION!

IS THAT LIKE A ZINE? ♪

"OKAY," SHE SAID,

BUT WASN'T NAGATO THE ONE WHO SHOULD HAVE SAID THAT?

OKAY!

HARUHI DIDN'T SEEM TO HAVE NOTICED KIMIDORI-SAN.

I FELT LIKE MAYBE IT WAS A GOOD THING THEY MET.

ALL THE WHILE, NAGATO FACED KIMIDORI, NEITHER OF THEM LOOKING AWAY FROM THE OTHER.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER CONDITION.

YOU ARE FREE TO USE THE PRINTING ROOM.

THE CONTENTS ARE NONE OF MY CONCERN.

THE COMPLETED NEWSLETTER WILL BE SET OUT ON A TABLE...

...IN THE MAIN HALL-WAY.

YOU KNOW HER WELL.

AWWW!

BUNNY GIRLS ARE RIGHT OUT.

BUT THAT IS ALL.

YOU MAY NOT HAND IT OUT OR SOLICIT READERS.

IF WE CAN'T ...?

YOU MUST LEAVE THEM UN-ATTENDED.

IF YOU CANNOT GIVE AWAY ALL TWO HUNDRED FROM THAT TABLE WITHIN THREE DAYS...

WELL, IF YOU SAY WE HAVE TO MAKE IT, WE'RE GONNA MAKE IT!

INTER-ESTING.

...WE WILL LET YOU KNOW WHEN THE TIME COMES.

THIS IS FOR YUKI, AFTER ALL.

CAN'T HAVE THE LITERATURE CLUB DISAPPEAR-ING.

ARMBAND: BRIGADE CHIEF

AND I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE TAKE MY STUFF!

THAT CLUB-ROOM IS MINE.

BA (WHAP)

ひょい
HYOI (LIFT)

YUKI, WE'LL PUT YOUR NAME IN THE MAST-HEAD AS PUB-LISHER.

WELL ...

SINCE IT'S DECIDED, WE'VE GOTTA HAVE A MEETING.

TAP PI (TING)

WHOO-HOO!!

FIRST WE'VE GOT TO GO LEARN HOW TO MAKE A NEWS-LETTER!

I'LL DO EVERYTHING ELSE, OF COURSE, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.

SUCH AN OB-NOXIOUS GIRL.

BATAN (SLAM)

FUWAN (WAFT)

PEKO (BOW)

KIMIDORI-KUN, WE'RE FINISHED HERE.

YOU MAY LEAVE.

YES, MR. PRESI-DENT.

IT WAS SUCH A PLEASANT SCENT...

...I FOUND MYSELF A BIT DIZZY.

KOIZUMI, CLOSE THE DOOR.

HUH?

HIS TONE HAS CHANGED ...

GACHA (CLICK)

DOKA (WHUMP)

THAT'LL ABOUT DO IT, RIGHT, KOIZUMI?

SHUBA (FWOOSH)

I NEVER WANTED THE DAMN JOB!

KEEP-ING IT UP WAS A PAIN.

STU-DENT COUNCIL PRESI-DENT, MY ASS.

THE PLAN CHANGED A LITTLE, BUT I PRETTY MUCH DID WHAT YOU WANTED.

WHAT A STUPID ACT.

NO, THANK YOU.

SA (CLIP)

WANT ONE?

RIDI-CULOUS DAMN WORK.

AND THEN I GOTTA DEAL WITH THAT FLIGHTY BROAD.

DOKA (KICK)

I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY THAT.

SO THIS PRESI-DENT'S ONE OF YOUR GUYS?

HE IS NOT DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO THE AGENCY.

BUT HE IS NOT AN ASSOCIATE IN THE SAME WAY THAT ARAKAWA-SAN OR MORI-SAN IS.

IF MORI-SAN, ARAKAWA-SAN, AND I ARE THE INNER CIRCLE, YOU COULD CONSIDER HIM THE OUTER CIRCLE.

HE IS OUR CONFEDERATE WITHIN THE SCHOOL...

...COOPERATING WITH US IN EXCHANGE FOR CERTAIN CONSIDERATIONS.

IT TOOK QUITE A BIT OF WORK.

YOU COULD SAY IT WAS THE RESULT OF EXTREME EFFORT ON MY PART.

I DON'T REALLY CARE WHO HE IS, BUT...

...HOW'D A GUY LIKE THIS GET TO BE COUNCIL PRESIDENT?

I'M BORED ALREADY.

BUT I FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN GETTING HIM ELECTED STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT.

DESPITE HIS LACK OF MOTIVATION, I HAD TO WORK AROUND THE CLOCK TO MAKE HIM A CANDIDATE AND BUILD SUPPORT FOR HIM.

GOING BY WHAT KOIZUMI HERE SAID...

THIS HAS GONE PAST BORING AND IS ACTIVELY SAPPING MY WILL TO LIVE.

THE AMOUNT OF MONEY IT REQUIRED TO WIN THE PRESIDENCY WAS PROBABLY ABOUT AS MUCH AS IT WOULD TAKE A MINOR POLITICAL PARTY TO RUN FOR OFFICE IN THE LOWER DIET HOUSE.

IT WAS A RATHER DIFFICULT JOB.

FRIGGIN' RIDICULOUS.

I WOUND UP GETTING TAPPED THANKS TO MY "PRESIDENTIAL FACE."

KO (KONK)

...I HAD TO BECOME PRESIDENT ...

...BEFORE THAT STUPID SUZUMIYA GIRL GOT THE IDEA TO TRY IT HERSELF.

生徒会長

SIGN: STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT

ANYWAY, KOIZUMI.

IN THIS CASE, HIS DISPOSITION WAS IRRELEVANT.

THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERED WAS HIS LOOKS.

AFTER FULLY CONSIDERING WHAT SUZUMIYA'S IMAGE OF A STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT MIGHT BE...

...HE WAS THE CLOSEST MATCH IN SCHOOL.

I'M FAIRLY BUSY MYSELF LATELY.

I WONDER ABOUT THAT.

IF WHAT YOU WANT IS TO AVOID SUZUMIYA RUNNING FOR THE JOB, THEN JUST DO IT YOURSELF.

NEXT YEAR, YOU BE THE PRESIDENT.

I THINK I GET IT NOW.

THE HELL SHE WOULDN'T.

HARUHI SUZUMIYA— GRAND REFORM FOR THE PROMOTION OF FUN!

AND LATELY I FEEL AS THOUGH SUZUMIYA WOULDN'T MAKE A BAD PRESIDENT.

BOARD: CONDITIONS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE LITERATURE CLUB - CREATE A PUBLICATION - WITHIN ONE WEEK, PRINT TWO HUNDRED COPIES - LEAVE COPIES ON A TABLE IN THE MAIN HALLWAY

IT WAS NO MORE THAN A SEED, THOUGH.

...TO GIVE HARUHI SOMETHING TO DO.

BASICALLY, KOIZUMI, THIS IS ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR GAMES.

YOU'VE JUST INVENTED THIS "STUDENT COUNCIL PLOTTING TO DESTROY THE LITERATURE CLUB" SCENARIO ...

BUT IF WE CAN'T...

ALL WILL BE WELL IF WE FINISH OUR PUBLICATION BY THE DEADLINE.

THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF POSSIBLE OUTCOMES.

HEY, KOI-ZUMI.

COUNT ME OUT.

YOU REMEM-BER, RIGHT?

IF THAT TIMES COMES, WE'LL JUST THINK OF A DIFFERENT PLAY.

I'LL BE GAME TO COUNTING ON YOUR BRAIN FOR THAT TOO.

FIRST OF ALL, SCHOOL RECORDS.

YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN, RIGHT?

OF COURSE, I REMEMBER.

WE'RE MAKING THE ARRANGEMENTS, NATURALLY

AS FAR AS ME BEING THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT GOES...

...IT DEFINITELY HAS ITS PERKS.

BOOKS: XX YEARLY BUDGET, SCHOOL RECORD, STAFF REGISTER, XX YEARLY STUDENT REGISTER

IT CAN MEAN ANYTHING.

"UPHOLD STUDENT INDEPENDENCE" REALLY IS A GREAT SLOGAN.

WHICH MEANS I CAN MESS AROUND WITH IT AS MUCH AS I WANT.

YOU'D BETTER BE.

THE STUDENT COUNCIL REALLY HAS BEEN TOTALLY USELESS SO FAR.

WE'LL PERMIT A MODEST ABUSE OF AUTHORITY ...BUT ... PLEASE DO NOT GET CARRIED AWAY.

I'LL BET THERE ARE SOME DELICIOUS DETAILS IN HERE.

THIS BUDGET IS ESPECIALLY INTERESTING.

OH, I KNOW.

THERE IS A LIMIT TO HOW MUCH SUPPORT WE CAN PROVIDE.

I'VE ALREADY SWEPT AWAY THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL.

THERE'S NO ONE LEFT TO OPPOSE ME.

I WON'T PULL ANYTHING THAT'D GET THE TEACHERS' ATTENTION.

HE SURE WAS EVIL ENOUGH.

KOIZUMI HAD DEFINITELY FOUND A GUY WHO WOULD PASS HARUHI'S TEST.

THIS PRESI-DENT WAS A PIECE OF WORK.

IT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME THINK THAT IT WOULD BE OKAY TO GO ALONG WITH HIM.

BUT FOR SOME REASON, HE WAS STRANGELY COMPEL-LING.

I JUST WANTED HIM TO CHOOSE HIS BATTLES CAREFULLY.

HIS ROLE WAS TO COME INTO OCCASIONAL CONFLICT WITH HARUHI.

SHE IS NOT.

SHE TOOK THE SECRETARY POST RATHER UNEXPEC-TEDLY.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE SECRE-TARY?

IS KIMIDORI-SAN ONE OF YOUR CONFED-ERATES?

I THINK I UNDER-STAND WHAT'S GOING ON.

BUT WHEN I CHECKED LATER, ALL THE RECORDS SAY SHE WAS THERE FROM THE START.

EVEN EVERY-ONE'S MEMORY.

NOBODY, NOT EVEN THE PRESIDENT, HAS ANY DOUBTS ABOUT IT.

THE TRUTH IS, SHE WAS ALREADY THERE.

I FEEL THAT IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CURRENT STUDENT COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION, WE'D APPOINTED A DIFFERENT STUDENT TO THAT POSITION.

OUR LAST ENCOUNTER WITH HER WASN'T A COINCI-DENCE, WAS IT?

I'D FIGURED AS MUCH.

KO

KO (CLACK)

EMIRI KIMIDORI IS ONE OF NAGATO'S COMRADES.

THAT MUCH IS CERTAIN.

KO

KO

KO

UNLIKE RYOUKO ASAKURA.

WELL...AT THE VERY LEAST, NAGATO AND KIMIDORI DO NOT OPPOSE EACH OTHER.

THEY APPEAR TO BE COM-PARATIVELY CLOSELY RELATED.

KO

WE IN THE AGENCY WOULD LIKE TO TEST OUR INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING CAPABILITIES.

THEY DIDN'T LOOK LIKE THEY GOT ALONG BADLY EITHER, THOUGH

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

THEY DIDN'T LOOK LIKE THEY GOT ALONG VERY WELL.

I WON'T SAY THERE WERE MANY...

...BUT WE CONTACTED A FEW T.F.E.I.s LIKE NAGATO IN AN EFFORT TO CONVEY OUR INTENTIONS.

BUT UNLIKE RYOUKO ASAKURA, WE KNOW THE OTHER FACTION IS NOT HOSTILE.

IT SEEMS THAT KIMIDORI WAS SENT BY A FACTION WITHIN THE DATA OVERMIND THAT'S DIFFERENT FROM NAGATO'S.

WHILE THEY WERE BY NO MEANS COOPERATIVE, WE CAN MAKE SOME DEDUCTIONS BASED ON THE FRAGMENTARY CONVERSA-TIONS.

THE PEACEFUL FACTION...

...HAD IT BEEN HER WHO'D CALMED NAGATO DOWN EARLIER?

...BUT WE'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT.

I DON'T KNOW SINCE WHEN...

IN MY OPINION, KIMIDORI'S ROLE IS TO OBSERVE NAGATO.

WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THERE IS NO NEED TO BE EXCESSIVELY CONSCIOUS OF HER MOVEMENTS.

DON (WHAM)

YOU TOO, KOIZUMI-KUN!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
DOSA (THUD)
WE'VE GOT A DEADLINE HERE!
IF WE DON'T HURRY, WE'RE GONNA BE IN TROUBLE!
YOU'RE LATE, KYON!
ARMBAND: EDITOR IN CHIEF
BAN (WHAM)
SINCE THIS IS THE LITERATURE CLUB, THERE'S A DIFFERENT TITLE THAT'S MUCH MORE APPROPRIATE.
STARTING TODAY AND FOR THE REST OF THE WEEK, I WILL NO LONGER BE THE BRIGADE CHIEF.
SHA (SLIDE)

C'MON, EVERYBODY, GET CRACKING!

BAN (BAM)

ARMBAND: EDITOR IN CHIEF

THERE'S NO USE COM-PLAINING ABOUT DETAILS, JUST WRITE!

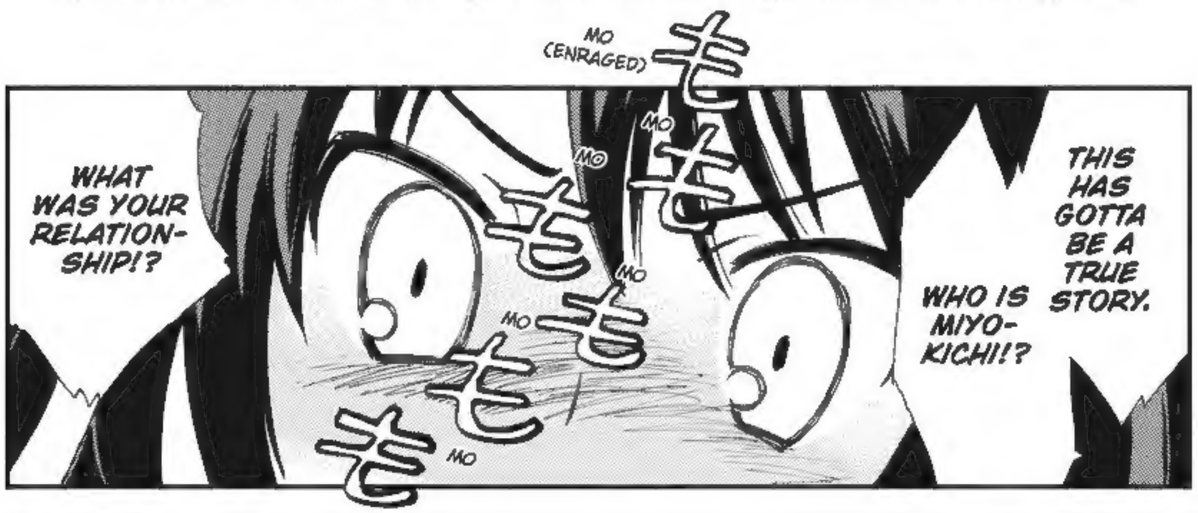
SOME-THING GOOD, OF COURSE.

AND IF I DON'T THINK IT'S GOOD, THEN IT'S GONE!

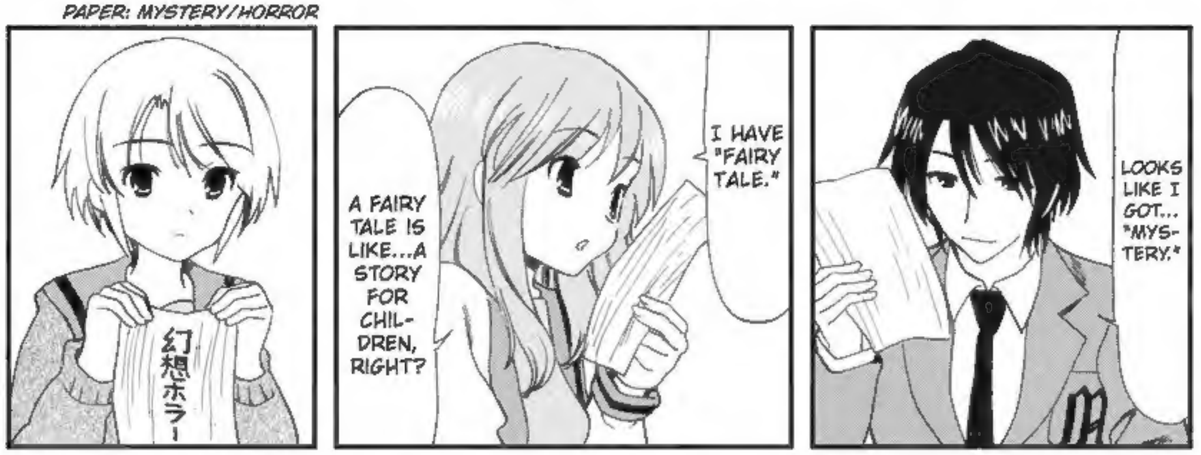
EDITOR IN CHIEF★FULL SPEED AHEAD! II : END

TO BE CONTINUED

But the unusual contents of Kyon's story SEND HARUHI INTO A RAGE!



Under Haruhi's direction, each member draws a random writing assignment...



An agonized Kyon turns to Koizumi for help and begins to write... his true-life experiences!?

Kyon's genre turns out to be: "love story"...!!

NEXT VOLUME:
THE CONCLUSION OF "EDITOR IN CHIEF★FULL SPEED AHEAD!"

AND MORE FROM "THE INDIGNATION OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA!"

THE MELANCHOLY OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA

12

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This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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